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WILLIAM YOUNG, JR., OF PHILADELPHIA,
QUEEN'S BOTANIST

BY JOHN W. HARSHBERGER

There appeared in 1916 a reprint of "Catalogue d'Arbres Arbustes et Plantes Herbacees d'Amerique," published in Paris in 1783 by William Young, Jr. The reprint is entitled "Botanica Neglecta, William Young, Jr. (of Philadelphia) 'Botaniste de Pennsylvania' and his Long-Forgotten Book being a Facsimile Reprint of his 'Catalogue d'Arbres Arbustes et Plantes Herbacees d'Amerique' published in Paris in 1783 with Prefatory Account of the Author and critical notes by the Editor Samuel N. Rhoads." Privately printed, Philadelphia, 1916. The copy of William Young's Catalogue which forms the basis of this reprint first came to the attention of Mr. Rhoads, the editor, while looking over a price-list of old books, issued in August, 1915, by a dealer in Scotland. It was obscurely listed, but Mr. Rhoads was fortunate in securing the copy bound in with a copy of Marshall's "Arbustrum Americanum."

Mr. Rhoads with the true interest of the bibliophile, then tried to find out something about William Young (Yong), Jr. References were found to him in the two volumes of Smith's "Linnaean Correspondence." This correspondence was carried on between Linnaeus, John Ellis, Peter Collinson, Dr. Fothergill and others. John Bartram refers to Young in the correspondence published in William Darlington's "Memorials of John Bartram and Humphry Marshall," Philadelphia, 1849. The editor of the reprint, Mr. Rhoads, then had recourse to the family records of the Darby Road Youngs and to his will found

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in the Office of Register of Wills, Philadelphia. The available history of the Youngs is given by Mr. Rhoads in his prefatory pages, and he raises certain points, which he thinks ought to be answered, such as the date of the botanist's birth and death, and his subsequent career as a scientific man.

The writer, following out a clue given on page ix of the reprint, has been able to supplement the known facts about William Young, Jr., and these facts are given in what follows. It is mentioned in the prefatory note of the reprint, the existence of William Young's Burying Ground at Fifty-second Street, one square west of Darby Road (Woodland Avenue) known as Leech, or Gaul, Burying Ground. As this locality is not far from the writer's home, a visit was paid to it on June 18, 1916, when it was discovered that the bodies of members of the Leech and Young families had been removed six years previously to Arlington Cemetery by Eugene Yerkes, undertaker at 71st and Woodland Avenue, Paschalville. Thomas L. Smith, who had moved in 1892 into the old road house built by John Leech in 1800, known as Sorrel Horse Tavern, still standing at 5123 Woodland Avenue, West Philadelphia, gave the information about the abandonment of the burial ground and the removal of those buried in it. John Leech was brother-in-law to William Young, who built his tavern in connection with an older house started by Johan Johansen, a Swede, in 1719. This old house is still standing and the old tap room is used as a kitchen by Thomas L. Smith, the present occupant. Calling up Mrs. Yerkes, the widow of the undertaker, she informed me that the bodies had been removed by Eugene Leech, an undertaker, living at 7127 Woodland Avenue, and not by Eugene Yerkes, her husband. Calling up Eugene Leech by telephone the writer ascertained that William Young was one of his family, that his body had been carefully removed and reburied in Bethany Section, Arlington Cemetery. He further stated that his father was Dr. H. K. Leech living at 185 East Plumstead Avenue, Lansdowne, and that he could give me information about the family tree. A visit to Lansdowne revealed the fact that Dr. Leech's son, Frank R. Leech, now connected with the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company,

Philadelphia, was a former student of the writer's in botany at the University of Pennsylvania. With this satisfactory introduction to the family, Dr. H. K. Leech was willing to give the desired information about William Young and William Young, Jr., and his son Frank R. Leech volunteered to reproduce the old family records photographically. This was done, and from the photographic copy thus secured, additional facts concerning the family are here given. These are combined with those printed by Mr. Rhoads, which are given herewith in quotation marks, so that a rather complete biographic sketch is possible.

William Young, the progenitor of the American family of that name, was born in Germany, January 12, 1713. The names of his great grandfather and grandmother were Robert and Elizabeth Young, who left England in May, 1556, because of religious persecutions and settled at the Constate of Hesse. William Young's mother was a German woman, but his paternal ancestors were English. On January 12, 1734, William Young, Sr., married Elizabeth Wageraine, daughter of a family of rank and nobility, who was born in 1711. William Young and his family left Germany and arrived in Philadelphia on December 24, 1744. Accompanying him were his wife and the following three children: Ann Christiana, his oldest daughter, who was born in Germany on October 21, 1737; Jacob Maximilian, who died at sea on November 25, 1744; William Young, Jr., the subject of this sketch, who was born on November 30, 1742, probably at Cassel Hesse in Germany. Also the mother and sister of William Young, Sr., came to America with him. There were born in this country Catherine Young on November 2, 1745, who later married Jacob Hoffman, but died in child-bed. Ann Christiana Young married John Leech and the mother of William Young died on January 12, 1746, a year and almost a month after reaching America. On April 17, 1751, William Young, Sr., moved with his wife and three children from Philadelphia to Conestoga. In May, William Young, Sr., the son William Young, Jr., and Ann Christiana moved to New River, Virginia, while the mother and other sister Catherine remained at Conestoga. Later in October, the family moved to Philadelphia, where William

Young, Sr., built a house on Front Street for £1,000. On November 23, 1753, Ann Christiana married John Leech and the whole family, William Young, Sr., William Young, Jr., Catherine Young and Mr. and Mrs. John Leech moved to Kingsessing. Later, on March 21, 1755, William Young, Sr., and his two children William, Jr., and Catherine moved to a farm of 50 acres woodland at Kingsessing purchased at £5 per acre of Captain Collis, of Blockley. They thus became neighbors of John Bartram, whose place was located on the Schuylkill River. There were born at Kingsessing as the children of John and Ann Christiana Leech the following persons:

- July 9, 1756, William Leech,
- June 1, 1759, John Leech,
- May 4, 1761, Elizabeth Leech,
- Oct. 15, 1763, Maximilian,
- Nov. 22, 1765, Henry and Catherine (twins).

On January 13, 1763, William Young, Sr., bought 15 acres of land from John Kite in Blockley for £60, perhaps from the proceeds of the sale of 400 acres of land in Virginia for £65 cash.

The first entry concerning William Young, Jr., is under date of February 12, 1764, when he sailed for England with Captain Culton by request of the King. He must have commenced the business of nurseryman and gardener in 1761, for we have this reference to him in a letter of Dr. Alexander Garden of Charleston, South Carolina to John Ellis of London dated July 25, 1761 (Smith's "Linnaean Correspondence," I: 512; Rhoads's Reprint): "I have at last met with a man who is to commence nurseryman and gardener, and to collect seeds, plants, &c., for the London market. He is a sensible, careful man, and has a turn for that business. He shall receive all the advice and assistance that I can give him. I must beg your interest in his favour; that you would bespeak what custom and commissions you can procure for him from your gardeners or nurserymen, or for any gentleman who may want what our province affords. He wants much to be acquainted with Mr. Gray and Mr. Gordon, at Mile, End; and I must beg that you would procure some commission from them to him. He is to employ his

whole time in procuring whatever may be ordered. His name is Young, and any letters for him inclosed to me will be taken care of. I must beg that you would endeavor to inform me on his account, what the prices of our several seeds are, or the value of young plants of Loblolly Bay, Azalea, Umbrella Magnolia, Beureria, Magnolia palustris, Halesia, Stuartia and such like."

The next reference to Young in the Linnaean Correspondence is on page 522, where in a letter from Dr. Garden to John Ellis, dated November 19, 1764, this is found: "Agreeably to your desire, I have spoken to Mr. Young, and given him your directions and my best advice so that I doubt not but his seeds and young plants will be good and his prices much lower." By this time William Young was in England, for his sister Ann Christiana (Leech) received a letter from him on February 23, 1765, in which her brother refers to his good reception, his audience with the King, with whom he conversed about the curiosities of the American country.

John Bartram was evidently a bit uneasy that his young neighbor might supplant him in the favor of George the Third and under date of October 16, 1764, he writes to Peter Collinson, "Dear Peter: I sent by Captain Budden, by my neighbor Young, my spring specimens and a vial of Chinquapins, to try how they will do that way. Some think he will make such an awkward appearance at court that he will soon come back again. Others that the Queen will take care of the German gentleman. I think that if he is put under Dr. Hill's care he will make a botanist, as he is very industrious and hath a good share of ingenuity." In May, 1765, Collinson in a letter to Bartram refers to the Queen's protégé: "I have not seen Young for some time. I conclude he is prosecuting his botanic studies."

With Collinson's next letter to Bartram, May 28, 1766, while Young was still in England, we read: "My dear John: I wonder thee should trouble thyself about the Queen, as she has Young, and everything will be shown him. It cannot be expected he will favour any one's interest but his own. He is now so new-modelled and grown so fine and fashionable, with his hair curled

and tied in a black bag, that my people, who have seen him often, did not know him. I happened not to be at home, so could not inquire what scheme he is upon."

William Young returned to America on November 3, 1766, with Captain Marshall, having received the title of Queen's botanist, and November 23, when he went to the Carolinas for plants and John Bartram wrote to Peter Collinson under date of December 5, 1766: "I am surprised that Young is come back so soon. He cut the greatest figure in town, struts along the streets whistling, with his sword and gold lace, etc. He hath been three times to visit me—pretends a great respect for me. He is just going to winter in the Carolinas: saith there is three hundred pounds sterling annually settled upon him. But Captain Chancellor tells odd stories of him; that he was put in prison, from which he was taken by two officers and put on board ship; but his friends utterly deny it. Its a pity but the truth was known, and the trying party snubbed." In reply to John Bartram's letter of inquiry, Peter Collinson writes on February 10, 1767: "I believe there is too much truth in what the Captain saith about Young. He may live to repent his folly and extravagance," etc. From the family records, we learn that William Young, Jr., made the following trips to England and the Southern states in connection with his business. January 13, 1768, he sailed from Carolina to England with casks of roots and plants, returning in good health to America on November 6, 1768. On November 17, 1768, eleven days after, he sailed to the Carolinas, returning to Philadelphia on March 23, 1769, with 19 boxes of plants. November 5, 1769, sees William Young again on his way to England with Captain Folgonor and many boxes and casks of plants. He returned home on August 26, 1770, hearty and well. He sailed to England on November 13, 1771, on the ship commanded by Captain Folgonor, returning to America on December 30, 1772, with a wife which caused him, the journal states, to be unhappy the rest of his life.

The success of his business, although he seems to have antagonized John Bartram, is shown in the following from a letter from

Dr. Fothergill to Humphry Marshall dated London, February 11, 1771: "William Young sends his plants over very safely, by wrapping them up in moss, and packing them pretty close in a box. They come thus very safe, and we lose very few of them. He ties the moss in a ball about the roots with a peice of pack thread or matting, or hemp strings, and puts them so close as to prevent them shaking about in the box."

Again Fothergill writes to Marshall on September, 1772, and it "I know not whether J. Bartram of any of his family continue to send over boxes of seeds as usual. He collected them with much care and they mostly gave satisfaction. W. Young has been very diligent, but has glutted the market with many common things; as the tulip trees, Robinias and the like. But contrary to my opinion he put them into the hands of a person, who, to make the most of them, bought up, I am told, all the old American seeds that were in the hands of the seedsmen here and mixed them with a few of W. Young's to increase the quantity. Being old and effete, they did not come up, and have thereby injured his reputation. I am sorry for him; have endeavored to help him; but he is not discreet."

Soon after the Revolutionary War broke out and the entries in the Leech family journal describe the part taken by members of the family in this conflict, we find that William Leech and John Leech were taken prisoners by the British and that William Young, Sr., was taken prisoner on March 18, 1778, his house was plundered and his cattle driven off. The total loss was estimated at £400. Later, on April 16, 1778, William Young, Sr., was liberated. The journal mentions the surrender of Lord Cornwallis on October 18, 1781, and the conclusion of peace in 1783. During the war the mother of William Young, Jr., Elizabeth Young, died on November 21, 1777, aged 66 years. After the declaration of peace William Young, Jr., started to collect plants again by land, but on March 16, 1785, evidently on his way back to Philadelphia, he was drowned, while crossing Gunpowder Creek. His body was in the water for seven weeks and three days and when found was buried without coffin on the banks of the creek, aged 43 years. On May 28, 1785,

between 3 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon, about two months after his son's death, William Young, Sr., who became sick on May 15, died of apoplexy with his clothes on, aged 73 years. This accounts for the fact that the son was not mentioned in his father's will (see Rhoads's Reprint, p. X). Later John and Maximilian Leech, in August, 1785, went to Gunpowder Creek for their uncle's body and found it, and on September 12, 1785, John Leech and William Young's widow took a carriage with three horses with a leaden coffin for the body. They returned on September 16, 1785, and buried William Young in the Burial Ground at Kingsessing. On December 23, 1785, John and Ann Leech began to keep tavern and raised a sign "A Citron (Orange) Tree and the Rising Sun." The final entry of interest concerning William Young, Jr., is that on June 15, 1786, his nephew, John Leech, bought his property in Kingsessing for £175, payable in six years, and that his widow, Martha Young, sailed on July 9, 1786, from Philadelphia for Dublin, Ireland, with her second husband, Mathias Newton Smith, an Irishman, born in Londonderry, a sailor on the ship *Lady Hill*, Captain Campbell. It might be said in closing that Harry K. Leech and his son Frank R. Leech are lineal descendants of Ann Christiana, sister of William Young, Sr., who died January 14, 1814, aged 77 years as the widow of John Leech, who died according to the family records on January 27, 1804, aged 78 years.

The family journal kept by Ann Christiana Young makes no mention of "Colly" mentioned in the will of William Young, Jr., probated on July 19, 1785. In the will, he left the farm to his wife Martha and after her death to his "Boy Colly," who was to be "lernerd to read and write and so must be sent to lern it." Mr. Rhoads in his prefatory note suggests that Colly was probably named after Peter Collinson, but he thinks it strange that he did not call him his son, if, indeed, a son he was! I would suggest that William Young, Jr., meant his negro boy, or black servant, for in England Colley is a country word for soot, and a water-colley means a water blackbird, just as a colley (collie) dog meant originally a black sheep dog, or possibly a dog kept

to look after the black-faced sheep. (Cf. The English Year Spring, p. 84, by W. Beach Thomas and A. K. Collett.) Nor do we know what the Queen's botanist did during the Revolutionary War, unless a certain Captain Young mentioned in the diary as serving with the American forces stationed at Bristol on May 1, 1777, happened to be the subject of this sketch. With these two exceptions, the biography of the Queen's botanist has been made reasonably complete by the discovery of the references to his life and work in the family journal in the possession of Harry K. Leech, of Lansdowne, Pennsylvania.

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JUNIPERUS COMMUNIS ON LONG ISLAND AND STATEN ISLAND

BY WM. T. DAVIS

About Selden, Long Island, N. Y., there is much uncultivated country, some of it woodland and some one time fields now overgrown with native vegetation. On the 30 of August, 1916, I was walking along a sandy road to the south of the village, when I was surprised to see close to the road two considerable clumps of *Juniperus communis* L. growing so near together that they touched. One was about four feet high, while the other was twice as tall or more. Their relative positions and heights may be judged by the accompanying picture. I did not expect to see this plant on Long Island, for in the Flora of the vicinity of New York by Norman Taylor, 1915, it is said to be "unknown on L. I. and S. I."*

The boy that was with me at the time stated that there was still another bush like the one we were examining, on a hill to the southward, that is on one of the hills of the Ronkonkoma moraine. This I did not have time to visit.

While as far as is known there is no *Juniperus communis* now growing on Staten Island, it used to occur in the clumps of

*Since that book was published specimens of *Juniperus communis* have been seen from Cedarhurst, Aquebogue and Amagansett on Long Island, in addition to this new locality mentioned by Mr. Davis.—ED.